

The 3 Rs Of Lobbying In Wisconsin

This is an overview of what individuals and organizations need to do to lobby in the State of Wisconsin. For additional information consult the publications cited.

I. REGISTRATION AND LICENSING

Registration of Organization Engaged in Lobbying Activities and Authorization of Lobbyists

- Wisconsin Statutes require that an organization that compensates an individual to attempt to influence legislation or agency rules register as a lobbying principal before the fifth day on which the individual communicates with state officials on behalf of the organization. (For more information, see Government Accountability Board Guideline 1513) In addition, the organization must authorize each individual who is lobbying on the organization's behalf and the individual must obtain a lobbying license. The registration and authorization form is usually filed at the same time as the lobby license application; that is, before an individual starts to communicate with state officials on behalf of an organization.
- The registration and authorization are effective upon the Government Accountability Board's receipt of the registration and authorization form and fee.
- Registration and authorization expire December 31, every even-numbered year.
- There is a **\$375 fee** for the lobbying organization to **register** as a principal.
- There is a **\$125 fee per lobbyist authorized**.

Lobby License and Authorization

- Wisconsin Statutes require that an individual obtain a lobbying license and authorization before the fifth day on which he or she communicates with state officials to attempt to influence legislation or an agency rule on behalf of an organization that pays the individual to do so. (For more information, see Government Accountability Board Guideline 1511.) The Government Accountability Board recommends that an individual who anticipates lobbying on more than four days in a six-month period obtain a lobbying license and be authorized by a registered lobbying principal *before* engaging in lobbying activities.
- The lobbying license and authorization to lobby are effective upon the Government Accountability Board's receipt of the license application, authorization form, and fees.
- The lobbying license expires December 31, every even-numbered year.
- For the 2015-2016 legislative session there is a **\$250 license fee** to represent one organization and a **\$400 license fee** to represent multiple organizations.

II. RESTRAINTS

- **No lobbyist or lobbying organization may furnish anything of pecuniary value** to an elective state official or candidate, agency official, or legislative employee, except that a campaign contribution may be made to an official or candidate during the five months prior to the official's or candidate's election in the November elections. (For more information, see Government Accountability Board Guidelines 1201, 1211, and 1250.)
- No lobbyist may instigate legislative or administrative action for the purpose of obtaining employment in support or opposition thereto.
- No lobbyist may contract to receive compensation dependent in any manner upon the success or failure of any legislative or administrative action.

III. REPORTING

Reporting bills, rules, and topics

- Each lobbying organization must report to the Government Accountability Board each bill or proposed rule and each topic on which the organization makes a lobbying communication. Lobbying on the budget bill must be reported by subject. The principal, through an authorized individual, must report the bill, budget subject, proposed rule, or topic to the Government Accountability Board within 15 days of the first lobbying communication.
- A lobbying organization may report each bill, budget subject, proposed rule, or topic to the Government Accountability Board via the electronic reporting tool on the Government Accountability Board's web site. An organization may also report by e-mail at GABEthics@wisconsin.gov, or by mail at P.O. Box 7984, Madison, WI 53707-7984.
- To learn who is lobbying on a bill or rule, or to learn what bills, rules, and other topics a particular organization is interested in, visit the Board's website throughout the course of the legislative session. Our web address is -- <http://lobbying.wi.gov>.

Principal's Statement of Lobbying Activities and Expenditures

- Each lobbying organization maintains a daily itemization of the time its employees spend in lobbying-related activities.
- A lobbying organization files a Principal's Statement of Lobbying Activities and Expenditures with the Government Accountability Board twice a year. The filing deadline is July 31 for the January through June reporting period. The filing deadline is January 31 for the July through December reporting period. In the event of the deadline falling on a weekend or holiday, the deadline moves to the next business day.
- Lobbying organizations submit their statement using the Government Accountability Board's on-line reporting system.

Lobbyist's Portion of Principal's Statement of Lobbying Activities -- daily itemization of lobbying time

- Each licensed lobbyist authorized by the organization maintains a daily itemization of the time s/he spends lobbying and engaging in activities related to lobbying.
- The lobbyist completes an electronic time report supplied by the Government Accountability Board and submits it prior to the January 31 or July 31 reporting deadline.

Lobbying guidelines and publications are available at <http://lobbying.wi.gov> and <http://gab.wi.gov>. Questions? You may stop by our office, write to us at P.O. Box 7984, Madison, WI 53707-7984, call our office at 608-266-8005, or FAX your request to 608-264-9319.